

Message Text

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73

ACTION EB-11

INFO OCT-01 EUR-25 AF-10 NEA-10 ISO-00 SCS-03 SCA-01

COME-00 SY-04 USSS-00 SCCT-02 AID-20 IO-14 CIAE-00

DODE-00 DOTE-00 FMC-04 INR-10 NSAE-00 RSC-01 CG-00

COA-02 DLOS-07 OMB-01 PM-07 H-03 L-03 NSC-07 PA-04

PRS-01 SP-03 SS-20 USIA-15 DRC-01 /190 W

----- 077136

R 261615Z APR 74

FM AMEMBASSY ATHENS

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 3200

INFO AMEMBASSY ANKARA

AMEMBASSY BEIRUT

AMEMBASSY CAIRO

AMEMBASSY LISBON

AMEMBASSY NICOSIA

AMEMBASSY RABAT

AMEMBASSY TUNIS

AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV

AMEMBASSY MADRID

AMEMBASSY ROME

AMEMBASSY VALLETTA

C O N F I D E N T I A L ATHENS 2500

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: ETRN PINS GR

SUBJ: PASSENGER SHIPPING IN MEDITERRANEAN: SECURITY

THREAT TO AMERICAN TOURISTS

REF STATE 072849

1. SUMMARY: EMBASSY MADE APPOINTMENT WITH CAPT. A. KARAMITROS, HELLENIC COAST GUARD CHIEF OF PORT POLICE, TO TAKE UP MATTER RAISED IN REFTEL. WHEN EMBASSY CONFIRMED APPOINTMENT, KARAMITROS STATED INQUIRY SHOULD BE TRANSMITTED VIA FOREIGN
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MINISTRY AND HE UNABLE SEE AMERICAN OFFICER UNLESS APPLICATION

MADE THROUGH FOREIGN MINISTRY; HE COULD, HOWEVER, TALK TO GREEK EMPLOYEE. O. BOUCAS, ECONOMIC ADVISER, CONDUCTED INTERVIEW DURING WHICH KARAMITROS OUTLINED SUCH MEASURES AS PORT POLICE CAN EMPLOY TO MITIGATE THREAT. KARAMITROS, HOWEVER, APPARENTLY DOES NOT BELIEVE THAT TERRORIST ATTACK ON CRUISE VESSEL AT ALL LIKELY. IN ADDITION, EMBASSY HAS ADVISED GOG VIA DIPLOMATIC NOTE OF OUR CONCERN. MFA NOW PURSUING MATTER THROUGH ITS OWN CHANNELS.

2. KARAMITROS STATED PORT POLICE HAS WILLINGLY RESPONDED TO REQUESTS FROM SHIPPING COMPANIES TO MAKE FROGMEN AVAILABLE TO SEARCH HULLS (LAST TIME THIS OCCURRED WAS WHEN SS FRANCE VISITED PIRAEUS EN ROUTE ISRAELI 25TH ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATION).

3. GREEK CRUISE SHIPS HAVE SECURITY SQUADS COMPOSED OF SELECTED OFFICERS AND CREW MEMBERS. KARAMITROS VOLUNTEERED NO FURTHER INFORMATION ON THESE SQUADS; NOR DID HE INDICATE WHETHER THEY HAVE ACCESS TO SIDEARMS.

4. KARAMITROS REVEALED THAT MINISTRY OF MERCHANT MARINE HAS SECURITY PLAN WHICH CAN BE SPEEDILY IMPLEMENTED IN CASE OF EMERGENCY. HE DID NOT REVEAL DETAILS OF THIS PLAN, WHICH HE SAID IS CONFIDENTIAL.

5. KARAMATROS CONSIDERS HIGHLY UNLIKELY THAT PIRACY WILL BE ATTEMPTED ON ANY PASSENGER OR CRUISE SHIPS IN MEDITERRANEAN. A VERY LARGE GROUP OF TERRORISTS, HE ASSERTED, WOULD BE REQUIRED TO SUBDUE AND EFFECTIVELY CONTROL A CRUISE LINE; SUCH A LARGE GROUP COULD EASILY BE DETECTED WHEN BOARDING. IN RESPONSE TO EMBOFF'S RETORT THAT ONLY A FEW DESPERADOS COULD, BY TAKING HOSTAGES, IMPOSE THEIR WILL, KARAMITROS STATED ENIGMATICALLY THAT IN CASES LIKE THIS THE MATTER BECOMES A POLITICAL ONE AS WELL, AND ONLY THE GOG ITSELF CAN DECIDE ON THE METHODS TO BE EMPLOYED TO NEUTRALIZE SUCH PEOPLE.

6. IN CLOSING, KARAMITROS SAID THAT TOURIST TRAFFIC IS SO DENSE DURING SUMMER MONTHS THAT IT VIRTUALLY IMPOSSIBLE FOR LOCAL AUTHORITIES TO MAKE THOROUGH CHECKS OF ALL PASSENGERS TRAVELING ON CRUISE SHIPS, FERRIES, ETC. AUTHORITIES ARE ON ALERT, HOWEVER, AND CAN ACT IMMEDIATELY UPON RECEIPT OF AN
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ALARM SIGNAL FROM ANY VESSEL.

7. INASMUCH AS ABOVE RESPONSE NOT VERY ENCOURAGING, EMBASSY PREPARED NOTE STATING, IN PART, "EMBASSY VERY MUCH CONCERNED OVER THIS THREAT AND WISHES ALERT APPROPRIATE AUTHORITIES WITHIN GOG TO THIS MENACE IN ORDER THAT ADEQUATE SECURITY MEASURES MAY BE TAKEN." EMBOFF PERSONALLY DELIVERED NOTE TO MFA APRIL 26. REACTION BY AMERICAN DESK OFFICER WAS ONE

OF CONCERN. HE ASSURED EMBOFF THAT WARNING WOULD BE PASSED
TO APPROPRIATE AUTHORITIES. MFA WILL CALL AND ARRANGE FOR
FURTHER MEETING AT WHICH OFFICIAL RESPONSE WILL BE GIVEN.
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NNN

Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: PARAMILITARY FORCES, PASSENGER TRANSPORTATION, THREATS, TOURISTS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 26 APR 1974
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: cunninfx
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1974ATHENS02500
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Film Number: D740100-0108
From: ATHENS
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1974/newtext/t19740412/aaaaakkc.tel
Line Count: 119
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ACTION EB
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 3
Previous Channel Indicators:
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: STATE 072849
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: cunninfx
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 14 MAY 2002
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <14 MAY 2002 by shawdg>; APPROVED <25-Sep-2002 by cunninfx>
Review Markings:

Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
30 JUN 2005

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: PASSENGER SHIPPING IN MEDITERRANEAN: SECURITY THREAT TO AMERICAN TOURISTS
TAGS: ETRN, PINS, GR, US
To: STATE
Type: TE
Markings: Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 30 JUN 2005